

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the claim amendments and following remarks.

Status of Claims

Claims 1, 4-9, 13, 18-20, 25, and 30 have been amended and claims 2, 15, and 29 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein. Claims 1, 3-14, 16-28, and 30 are currently pending in the application of which claims 1, 13, and 25 are independent.

No new matter has been introduced by way of the amendments above. Entry thereof is therefore respectfully requested.

Appeal Decision

The Decision on Appeal affirmed the Examiner's rejection of claims 1, 3, 13, 14, and 17. As discussed in greater detail below, independent claims 1 and 13 have been amended to incorporate the features of respective allowable claims 2 and 15 and are thus considered to also be allowable. Independent claim 25 has also been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claim 2.

Allowable Claims

The indication that claims 2, 4-10, 15, 16, 18-20, 22, and 23 contain allowable subject matter is noted with appreciation. Independent claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the features of allowable claim 2 and independent claim 13 has been amended to incorporate the

features of allowable claim 15. In addition, the claims that previously depended upon one of claims 2 and 15 have been amended to depend upon one of independent claims 1 and 13. Accordingly, claims 1, 3-14, and 16-24 are allowable over the cited documents of record.

Dependent claims 11, 12, 21, and 24 were previously withdrawn from further consideration as being directed to a nonelected invention. As these claims are now dependent upon allowable independent claims, the Examiner is respectfully requested to also indicate these claims as being allowable.

Independent claim 25, which was also previously withdrawn from further consideration as being directed to a nonelected invention, has been amended to incorporate the features of now-canceled claim 29. As such, independent claim 25 now recites the allowable features of claim 29, which is equivalent to claim 2 and was indicated as being allowable.

Accordingly, an early indication that claims 1, 3-14, 16-28, and 30 are allowable is earnestly solicited.

Claim Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Dai. This rejection is now considered to be moot in light of the amendments to independent claims 1 and 13 to include the subject matter of allowable claims 2 and 15, respectively.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 3, 14, and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Dai in view of Taussig. This rejection is now considered to be moot in light of the amendments to independent claims 1 and 13 discussed above.

Conclusion

In light of the foregoing, withdrawal of the rejections of record and allowance of this application are earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference with the undersigned would assist in resolving any issues pertaining to the allowability of the above-identified application, please contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below. Please grant any required extensions of time and charge any fees due in connection with this request to Deposit Account No. 08-2025.

Respectfully submitted,

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